

# **COLLECTION OVERVIEW**

## **EDUCATION**

### **I. SCOPE**

The education collections in the Library of Congress can be traced back to the purchase of books from founding father Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson believed that education was very important. Several books on grammar and mathematics were included in the collection that he sold to Congress in 1815. Today, the education collections include material on the theory and practice of education, special aspects of education, history of education, general education topics and information on individual educational institutions. These materials about the United States and many other countries, regions, and locales, are available in monograph, serial, microform, electronic, and other formats within the Library's collections. While the majority of the education collections are housed in the General Collections, significant additional holdings can be found in special collections of government publications, serials, rare books, films and manuscript materials. See also the Collections Policy Statement for Education.

### **II. SIZE**

An October 2007 ILS count of Class L titles in the Library of Congress Online Catalog numbered 254,000 titles in education consisting of monographs, scholarly journals, directories, descriptive works, textbooks, bibliographies, yearbooks and serials for the United States and many other countries. The Library owns a complete set of ERIC microfiche which numbers 483,000 items, has approximately 16,000 educational serial titles, a set of national and international college catalogs on microfiche from 1975 through the 1980's, and a very extensive collection of government publications, including U.S., federal, state, and international publications in the field of education. The Library also subscribes to major electronic databases, which support research in education.

### **III. GENERAL RESEARCH STRENGTHS**

The Library's long-standing ability to acquire educational materials published throughout the world contributes to a solid and historically distinct collection. The educational collections are particularly distinguished by the comprehensiveness of their scope, and by the diversity of languages and cultures represented. The collections are extraordinarily strong in the theory and practice of American education, the history of American education, school administration and organization, materials about education and state, both secondary and higher education, illiteracy, professional education, and in resources about American education institutions. In addition the collections about the educational systems of other countries are significant. The Library's complete collection of ERIC microfiche is supplemented by an extensive collection of scholarly journals and monographs. The collections are strong in educational materials from professional societies and associations. A number of monographic series in the field of education augment the strength of the collection. Other noteworthy research materials include 19th

century texts on a variety of related subjects; many items in the general and special collections that are not found within the L classification contain supporting political, social, religious and psychological information that directly support research in the educational classes.

#### **IV. AREAS OF DISTINCTION**

Many early imprints such as primers, readers, and spellers are held in the Rare Book and Special Collection Division, which includes a near-complete set of McGuffey readers. Many early children's books are germane to educational research given that early materials produced expressly for children were written to instill proper conduct and demeanor rather than to enchant or delight. The Library's collection of materials from Thomas Jefferson's library includes several books of historical merit in fields related to education such as grammar and mathematics. Resources about education systems and the history of education in other countries are collected at the research level in virtually all modern languages. The Manuscript Division, in addition to numerous collections related to education, has personal papers from pioneers in the fields of education of deaf peoples such as the *Papers of T.H. and Edward Miner Gallaudet* and the education of African American peoples such as the *Papers of Nannie Helen Burroughs*. The Division also holds historically important education collections such as the internal communication for implementing the landmark desegregation ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* which are part of the *Papers of the NAACP*.

#### **V. ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

Subscriptions to electronic resources add to the strength of the Library's education collection. Among them are the database *Education Fulltext* by Wilson which provides the fulltext of articles from over 550 English language periodicals and yearbooks; *Education Journals via ProQuest* which includes over 500 titles on education with nearly 300 titles in fulltext; and, the *ERIC* education database which provides comprehensive education coverage of journal and non-journal literature from 1966 to the present. Subscription database searches through *ERIC* also allow users to search over a dozen other CSA Illumina subscription databases simultaneously. Related databases such as *Digital Dissertations* offer a scholarly index to more than 248,000 doctoral dissertations and master's thesis on the subject of education.

#### **VI. WEAKNESSES/EXCLUSIONS**

The Library does not acquire textbooks below the college level, unless the item is of particular distinction in the field, or provides information about cultures not available elsewhere. The Library's collections are not as strong in the fields of computer-assisted instruction or measurement and testing, although the Library does have a collection of educational test materials in microform. In addition, general and specific works in preschool, elementary and secondary education (curriculum, mathematics, the arts, reading, social sciences and history) are collected at only a basic level.